Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 06675 270925Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 TRSE-00 SP-02 /035 W
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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2822
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

UNCLAS LISBON 6675

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: ELAB, PO
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT CITES STATISTICS ON UNEMPLOYMENT

REF: LISBON 6628

1. SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EMPLOYMENT AND POPULATION ISSUED NOTICE AUGUST 25 COMMENTING ON ALLEGATIONS BY CGTP-INTERSINDICAL THAT MORE THAN 20,000 PORTUGUESE WORKERS HAVE BEEN DISMISSED SINCE PROMULGATION IN DECEMBER 1976 OF DECREE LAW REGULATING COLLECTIVE DISMISSALS AND "JUSTIFIED DISMISSALS."

2. IN REFUTATION OF CGTP CHARGES, GOVERNMENT STATED IT HAD RECEIVED SINCE JANUARY 198 REQUESTS FOR PERMISSION TO DISMISS 2,745 WORKERS FOR ECONOMIC CAUSES. OF THESE, DISMISSAL OF 890 WORKERS WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE GOP. THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT RECOGNIZED THAT WORKERS COULD ALSO BE DISMISSED FOR "JUST CAUSE" FOR DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS. AS SUCH CASES FALL WITHIN PURVIEW OF COURT SYSTEM, NO STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE BUT STATEMENT ASSERTED THAT NUMBER IS FAR BELOW THAT CLAIMED BY THE CGTP. IT IS NOTE PARTENTETICALLY THAT PRIME
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PAGE 02 LISBON 06675 270925Z

MINISTER SOARES, IN OUTLINING NEW ECONOMIC MEASURES TO THE NATION ON AUGUST 25 (REFTEL, SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN 32,000 PERSONS PURGED FROM THEIR JOBS FOR POLITICAL REASONS BETWEEN APRIL, 1974, AND NOVEMBER 1975. IN CONTRAST, SINCE THAT TIME ONLY 7,200 PERSONS HAD BEEN DISMISSED FOR "JUST CAUSE" AND FOR ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED COLLECTIVE DISMISSALS.

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3. GOP STATEMENT CLAIMED 207,000 UNEMPLOYED WERE REGISTERED WITH GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT OFFICES AS OF END OF 1976. FIGURE ROSE TO 224,000 AT END OF MARCH BUT FELL TO 218,000 AT END OF JULY. AS CURRENT TOTAL INCLUDES 10,500 RETURNEES FROM FORMER COLONIES WHO REGISTERED IN 1977, GOVERNMENT CONCLUDES THAT CGTP CHARGES OF A WAVE OF DISMISSALS ARE UNFOUNDED.

4. COMMENT: GOP ESTIMATES TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT BY MULTIPLYING NUMBER OF REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED FOR FACTOR OF 2.7, A FIGURE ARRIVED AT SEVERAL YEARS AGO USING CENSUS SAMPLES. USING THIS SYSTEM, TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT WOULD APPROXIMATE 589,000 ABOUT 18 PERCENT OF THE ESTIMATED LABOR FORCE OF 3.2 MILLION. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THIS EXAGGERATES UNEMPLOYMENT PICTURE SOMEWHAT. INSTITUTION OF SYSTEM OF ENEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION HAS ALMOST CONTINUALLY INCREASED PERCENTAGE OF UNEMPLOYED WHO ARE REGISTERED WITH GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT OFFICES. THUS, WHILE UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS A MAJOR PROBLEM, ITS EXACT DIMENSION CAN ONLY BE ESTIMATED IN ROUGHEST TERMS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: UNEMPLOYMENT, DATA
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Errors: N/A
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 LISBON 6628
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1470801
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOVERNMENT CITES STATISTICS ON UNEMPLOYMENT
TAGS: ELAB, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
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